

*Evaluating the Recruitment Procedures
for Adoptive Homes Through the Cabinet
for Families and Children*



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Introduction

- Every year, throughout the United States, 15, 000 children turn eighteen and have no permanent family or home. (Craig, 1995).
- The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) was put in place to alleviate some of the permanency problems within the United States.
- In regards to adoption, ASFA requires the Cabinet for Families and Children to perform quicker and a higher quantity of adoptions.
- If states cannot prove that reasonable recruitment efforts are being conducted to help children obtain an adoptive home, federal funding can be decreased or lost.

Purpose of Quantitative



- To assess if recruitment efforts are being conducted
- To examine which recruitment efforts have been carried out
- To evaluate if recruitment efforts have been done properly and how this has affected adoption process

Quantitative Research Questions



- Are sufficient recruitment efforts being conducted for children in need of adoptive homes?
- Which recruitment efforts have been carried out?
- Does gender, ethnicity, or age affect recruitment efforts?
- How are recruitment efforts affected by gender, ethnicity, and age?

Design and Sample



- Non-experimental
- Chart File Review
- 42 Cases
- Sample Selected by Systematic Random Sampling (every third case was selected)
- Variables Measured include:
 - Demographics (Age, Gender, Ethnicity)
 - Number of Children within a File
 - Length of TPR
 - Recruitment Efforts
 - Behavioral/Medical Issues
 - Level of Child

Results

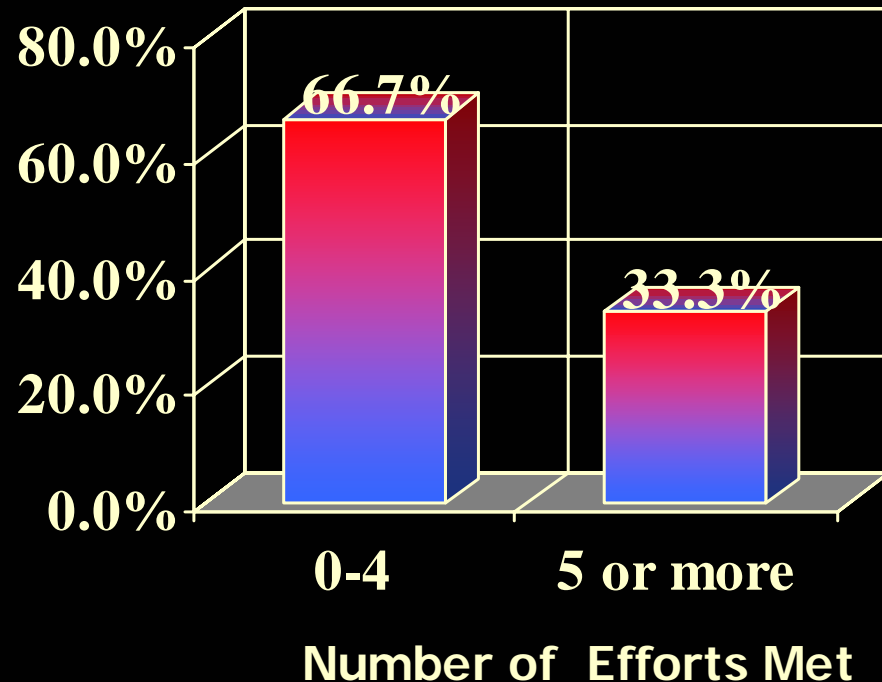
Recruitment Efforts

Satisfactory = 5 or more efforts*

Satisfactory Efforts were not maintained 66.7% of the time.

* at least 5 efforts can be done by worker and do not require family

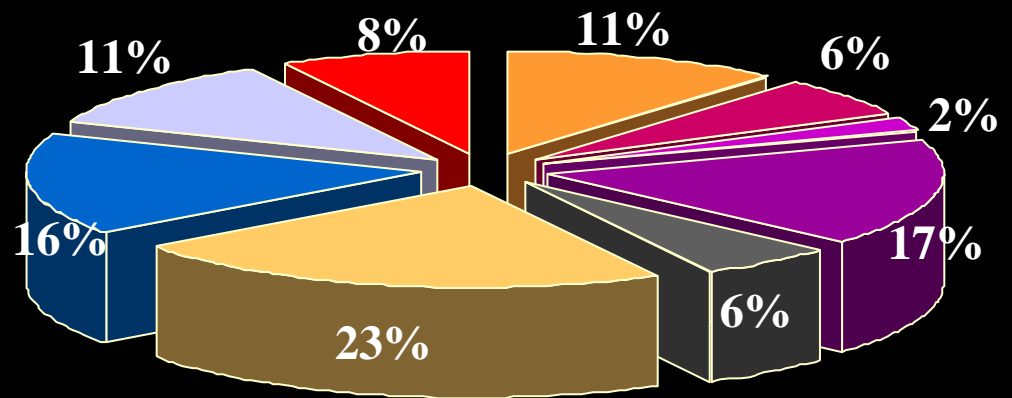
Frequency of Cases with Satisfactory Efforts



Results

- 23% of cases had Homestudies read
- 2% of cases had a SNAP website

Frequency of Utilized Recruitment Efforts



- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| ■ SNAP Photo | ■ SNAP Filming WED Child |
| ■ SNAP Website | ■ SNAP Picnic |
| ■ Videoconferencing | ■ Homestudies |
| ■ Attempted Matches | ■ Pre-placement Conferences |
| ■ Adoptive Placements | |

*SNAP is the Special Needs Adoption Program

Results

Recruitment Efforts

$\chi^2(1) = 1.867,$
 $p < .172$

$\chi^2(3) = 7.893,$
 $p < .048$

$\chi^2(2) = .095,$
 $p < .953$

Variable

% Satisfactory

% Non Satisfactory

Ethnicity

Caucasian

47%

53%

Minority (Af.Am., Bi-Racial)

26%

74%

Developmental Age

Elementary

50%

50%

Middle

29%

71%

High

0%

100%

Cases with Mixed Ages

56%

44%

Gender in File

Cases with 1 or more (All males)

33%

67%

Cases with 1 or more (All females)

30%

70%

Cases with mixed genders

36%

64%

Discussion of Quantitative

- It was found that the majority of cases met unsatisfactory status.
- Recruitment effort utilized most often was Homestudies read followed by SNAP Picnic.
- Unsatisfactory efforts seemed to follow minorities, and families with high school age kids only.
- The trend for recruitment for all gender groups was similar.

Purpose of Qualitative



- Gather information regarding process of recruitment
- To obtain opinions and suggestions of employees regarding recruiting efforts of adoptive homes.

Qualitative Research Questions

- What methods, if any, do you feel could enhance the recruitment process of the Cabinet for Families and Children?
- In your opinion, are equal and sufficient recruitment efforts being conducted for all children waiting to be adopted? Please explain.
- What encourages and what hinders recruitment for certain children?
- As a worker, what part do you play in the recruiting of adoptive homes and what do you feel good about doing?

Design and Sample

- A one-on-one interview was conducted by researcher with adoption workers within the Cabinet for Families and Children and took approximately 30-40 minutes each.
- There were ten workers interviewed for this study.
- The Tesch method was utilized in evaluating qualitative findings.
- A seven question guide interview instrument was used to guide the interviews.

Themes and Quotes

- Workers felt that not have enough people or the right people recruiting for adoptive homes.
 - “The right people are not recruiting. They need a larger and more diverse team. You need diversity if you want to attract diverse homes for different kids”.
- Older children, kids with severe behaviors, and minorities get less recruitment.
 - “Harder to place kids (minorities, and older kids) require people to work harder. These kids are often ignored because people want quick and easy results”.
 - “Older kids and minority children are paid less attention to because they are not the most sought after”.
- Kids that are easy to place are recruited for most.
 - “Recruitment is focused on children that will be easy to place because this will allow them to get a higher number of adoptions”.

Themes and Quotes

- We are mostly trained on maintaining our kids instead of how to get them adopted.
 - “Not a lot of recruitment is done for kids with bad behavior, because workers are more worried about “fixing” the kids than getting them adopted”.
- Greater concern for numbers and money than getting kids into the right homes.
 - “The goal at CFC seems to be to get kids in any home, not the *right* home. They are more concerned with the quantity of adoptive placements instead of the quality”.
- Workers feel good about participating in SNAP and recruitment efforts.
 - “Knowing that I made a positive decision for a child or family makes me feel good”.

Themes and Quotes

- Workers need to know SNAP responsibility and need to be more involved in the recruitment process.
 - “I have been here for five years and I still don’t know what SNAP is specifically supposed to be doing for our kids”.
- Workers really enjoy working with kids and families and seeing kids get adopted is wonderful.
 - “Making kids happy makes me happy”.
- Recruitment is biased and not equal or sufficient. Biases get in the way of recruitment.
 - “Recruitment is not equal. Nothing is equal anymore. It doesn’t make it right...that’s just how it is”.
 - “Individual prejudices get in the way of recruiting. Workers push the kids they want to push”.

Discussion of Qualitative

- Several themes were pulled out from the qualitative interviews with agency employees at the Cabinet for Families and Children.
 - Themes suggest that employees feel like the Cabinet cares most about money issues and maintaining kids and less about hiring enough workers or the right type of workers for recruiting purposes.
 - Need to care less about money and more about well-being of kids
 - Kids that are easy to place get recruited first, while those who are older, fall in a minority group, or have behavioral difficulties are less recruited. The recruitment process is biased and not equal or sufficient.
 - Recruitment process needs to be fair giving each child equal opportunities
 - Workers like the concept of the SNAP program but need more training in SNAP and need to learn more about SNAP responsibility.
 - Employees need to have more training in SNAP

Conclusion:

Putting It All Together

- The management of recruitment efforts is necessary for:
 - Maximizing growth and development potential of the clients.
 - Promoting more equal recruitment efforts, which will better the chance of adoption.
 - Recruiting more adoptive homes, which increases the number of potential adoptive placements for the kids.
- Weaknesses of the study include poor sample size, poor generalizability to larger populations.

Reference

Craig, C. (1995). What I need is a mom: The welfare state denies homes to thousands of children. *Policy Review*, 73. Retrieved October 23, 2001, from <http://www.policyreview.com/summer95/thcraig.htm>